

Abbott Formula Changes



What is happening?

- Abbott is changing their formulas:
 - ❖ Similac Sensitive, Total Comfort and Spit Up will be 19 calories per ounce. Similac Advance will stay 20 calories per ounce *in sizes available through WIC*.
 - ❖ Staging formula: stage 1 (0-12 months), stage 2 (6-12 months), stage 3 (over 1, toddler)- only stage 1 allowed on WIC
 - ❖ Changing “Early Shield” to “OptiGRO” (relates to DHA, lutein, and vitamin E); formulation is not changing.
 - ❖ Discontinuing Similac Sensitive in concentrate (we have about 9 infants currently on this)



When?

- New formulas will be on the shelf between April and July
- January 1, 2014: No **new** issuance of these formulas; ONLY infants on one of these formulas (before Jan.) may **stay** on them until April 1, 2014
- April 1, 2014: Rx required for infants to stay on these formulas

Why?

- Abbott is marketing this as an “innovation” to bring formula closer to breast milk.
 - Referring to some research that suggests BM may have lower calorie density
- Keep in mind that calorie density of breast milk changes for many reasons (time of day, age of infant, etc.), and this is difficult to replicate in formula.

How?

- All infants (new to WIC or formula) should be given the option of Similac Advance or Enfamil Prosobee.
- If lactose or milk protein intolerance is suspected, try Prosobee.
- For infants on Sensitive, Total Comfort or Spit Up **now**:
 - May continue to issue, encourage them to TRY Advance before next appt. (can issue a mix of formula)
 - If it does not work, offer Prosobee, or provide them with the appropriate Rx
 - Please do not suggest an exempt formula, this req. a dx.

M-SPIRIT

- The affected Similac formulas have been “end-dated” for March 31, 2014; you cannot issue those past that date
- New items have been entered with “RX” after the title, these require an Rx to be issued.
- **A CPA can approve the SIMILAC formulas (in M-SPIRIT)**
- To mix a package, “edit” down the assigned formula and “add” in the other.
- Alerts will start to appear for family’s of affected participants
 - This includes children who are prescribed these formulas

Other Questions

- Can we afford this?
 - It will be more expensive if infants move to an exempt formula, however, we anticipate a small percentage will do this.
- On the Similac Rx, there is a space for “other” under Dx, can we get rid of that?
 - No
 - Clarification was received yesterday by FNS which stated that the medical conditions are not as strict as for FP III.
 - If a provider writes in “intolerance/colic”, “spit up”, or “lactose sensitive” this is OK. Do not accept if it is simply preference.

Continued...

- Is this food package III?
 - No. These are not “exempt” formulas, and we cannot issue the 4-5 month amount of formula if “no food” is checked.
- Where are the handouts?
 - The December 16, 2013 newsletter has the participant letter, provider letter, local agency letter, retail letter, Rx forms, and educational materials.
 - There were a couple of typos originally, have been fixed and updated.

Retailers

- The retail letter stated that we are phasing out the affected Similac formulas, it also stated stocking requirements are not changing.
- Some retailers may misinterpret this, LARCs may want to contact local retailers and ensure they understand to continue accepting benefits until told otherwise.

New Information

- Abbott has not yet confirmed that they will continue to pay rebates for these formulas past April-July phasing in.
- We can only continue with these products if they pay a rebate.
- We are awaiting this information and will keep you posted.
- Please, for the time being, only issue Jan-March benefits to families with these formulas.



Any other questions?

